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# HAMSA

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Friends and Companions,

As we come to the Fall equinox we approach the most dramatic moment of the year, the moment of planetary initiation—the descent of the seed into the soil. This year the cyclic drama is enhanced by powerful celestial configurations, and the great tide of change which has swept over the world may reach its crest, or one of its crests, during this forthcoming Fall.

Drama resides in the conflict of elements, and as such is inherent in all manifestations of life. The word comes from the Greek root which signifies "to do, to act;" thus is nearly synonymous with "activity." Activity, however, does not mean only to move about physically, or to accomplish outer deeds—as far as we understand the word "outer." Activity is the fourth principle of the metaphysical Tetraktys which includes also energy, form and substance. We may define it as the result of the relationship of energy and substance within a form.

Energy is the positive principle; substance, the negative principle. Form is the archetypal or essential pattern of relationship conditioning any particular coming together of the two principles or polarities. Activity is the result of this coming together. It is the "performance", i. e. that which occurs "through a form", etymologically speaking. All actions are performances involving the two protagonists: energy and substance,— or, as the Chinese would say, *Yang* and *Yin*; the masculine and feminine polarities, Light and Darkness, in a more cosmic sense. All actions are dramas;—or when seen from the center of all life, rituals.

Chinese life was based on a wonderful synthesis of all human and cosmic activities, and of all knowledge as well, which has come to us in one of the greatest books of all times, the *Yi-King*: the Book of Change. In it is set down in symbols the cycle of transformations which constitutes in its totality the complete drama or ritual of all life. Starting from the original dualism of *Yang* and *Yin*, the Book proceeds geometrically by showing the many interactions of these two; first in a threefold scheme of archetypal manifestation (for every relation between two elements involves action, reaction and interaction); then in a sixfold realm of activity, which is the realm of actual drama and performance. Thus 64 hexagrams are formed, representing all the possible phases of interaction between the two principles in the sixfold realm of activity. These hexagrams are distributed in a circle, very much as the signs of the zodiac in modern astrology.



What this cyclic series of hexagrams represents is the universal drama of life, the cosmic pattern of all activity and of all reaction to activity (which is what we call, knowledge). More specifically, it stands as the graph of the changing relationship sun to earth during the cycle of the year. But this relationship, which curves along the path of the earth's orbit, is in fact the very origin of the vital principle in everything. Life does not come from the sun. Life is the result of the enacted relationship between sun and the earth, between energy and substance, Light and Darkness.

At the summer solstice, *Yang* dominates; at the winter solstice, *Yin*; at the equinoxes, they are in a state of dynamic equilibrium. But in the Fall *Yin* increases; while in the Spring *Yang* increases and *Yin* decreases in intensity. Thus four crucial points, the Cross of activity, the Four Acts of the drama—which a Fifth Act may, or may not, synthesize. This Fifth Act is the "Quintessence", of alchemical lore. It is the Fifth Limb—the house of the the Creative, whether above or below. It is the sacred place where dwells Tao, the Great Meaning, the apex of the pyramid based on the four crucial points of the year, the Symbol of all symbols. Tao is the solution of all conflicts;—and therefore it is not a thing or even an essence, but a process. It is the Way in the Head (according to the origin of the Chinese ideogram for Tao which is made up of the sign for 'Head' and of that for 'going'). Better still, it is the Process in the Head; the going of the Initiate up the steps that lead to the top of the pyramid—a flat top, originally, for the apex itself could only be the mystic Fire rising from the exalted altar; the altar where the Four Errors (which are really limited viewpoints) are burnt and are solved, resolved, integrated into the One Meaning.

This Meaning cannot be told in intellectual words; but it may be conveyed by a Symbol—and a glance. Thus the beautiful story of the "initiation" of Maha-Kashyapa, the illumined disciple of the Buddha, who is considered as the original Seed of the beautiful Tree of Zen Buddhism, which germinated in the person of Boddhi-Dharma, its nominal founder. One time while the Buddha was teaching his disciples, he became silent. Maha-Kashyapa looked at the Blessed One; then picked a flower and handed it to him. The Buddha looked at the flower; and smiled. Then gave it back to Maha-Kashyapa; who, in turn, smiled. In that smile of the Buddha, the disciple had seen the Great Meaning; and thus received the ineffable Truth which is beyond words;—which is the solution of all conflicts. But more still, which is the creative principle itself; as significance is creative. As significance, alone, is creative . .

Zen is the flowering of Chinese Wisdom, as the apex of the pyramid is the flowering of its base, as the Fifth is the flowering of the Four. China had marvelously balanced her world of realities, equating conflicts and reducing all emphases to the Golden Mean of the Middle Way. But such an equilibrium can easily become static. If the polarities are too well balanced within, activity may cease; and the drama becomes not resolved, but lost in sleep. This is the false goal, symbolized in the story of how Boddhi-Dharma struggled for long hours to keep a long day of meditation without sleep; and being overcome by the tendency to sleep, cut his eye-lids. And the eye-lids fallen upon the soil gave birth the next day to the mystic plant of tea, whose virtue banishes sleep from the meditating ones.



Thus the forceful and impetuous Boddhi-Dharma awakened in China the few who were ready, and by stirring again the dormant fire of the eternal Drama, offered a new living solution. And this solution had creative power. The Meaning revealed, the Symbol beheld, roused the creative fire of painters and poets and musicians. Beyond China, it reached the land of the Morning Sun. There Zen was to reach perhaps its most refined and characteristic expression. And Japan became the land of the paroxysm of the beautiful, the land where Meaning became Form and Beauty; and that other beauty of living, that is nobility—the Samurai code. Later still, came the exquisite fragrance and restraint of the cult of flowers, culminating in the Tea Ceremony.

Something similar, but so much cruder, had happened in Greece, centuries before. There the universal Drama pictured in the *Yi-King* had to be taught in Mysteries. And the Mysteries of Demeter, the Eleusinian Mysteries, taught men, barely awakening to philosophy and the perception of Meaning, symbols of the great drama of the year—the drama of all activity, and all life. The Eleusinian Mysteries represented for Greece the perfect ideal of society, which Chinese Sages proclaimed and which Plato was to teach in a more or less modified form. How far the fabled Orpheus (who according to Brahmanical tradition was Arjuna, disciple of Krishna), and Pythagoras (the *Pitta-Guru* or "Father-guru" of the Westerners; also Yavanacharia, i. e. the teacher of the Yavanas, or men of Ionia) were connected with these Eleusinian Mysteries is not outwardly known. But it is safe to surmise that some men in Europe, even today, know the whole story of the birth, growth and decay of the Greek Mysteries. It may even be permissible to think that Masonry is not the only heir to remaining traditions, and that eventually a synthesis of the Greek Mysteries and of Zen may be known to the New World, whither Arjuna-Orpheus, the great Civilizer, is said to have journeyed and married the daughter of a great king-Initiate, Ulupi.

All of which may be merely symbolical. But symbols are the only gates through which the Great Meaning can ever reveal itself. Symbols, once enacted, become dramas and rituals. And who knows if new rituals are not soon to take hold of the consciousness of America? The prodigious growth of the Utopian Society in California, presenting economic facts and problems of energy-production and distribution in rituals attracting thousands of people, is indeed significant, whatever the inherent value of the movement may be. The "energy" dealt with may be purely physical and material. But the Eleusinian Mysteries were at first, or originated from, agricultural celebrations. Demeter and Proserpine were goddesses of physical fertility. May not the whole new economic movement, which is truly American and not a by-product of European feudalism (as Fascism and Marxian Communism), be the *materialistic set-up* for an autonomous rebirth of the Mysteries, in and of the New World?

All true Mysteries deal with the use and control, production and distribution of energy or power. In a purely physical sense our great technologists are hierophants and priests of the Mysteries of the modern type of power. They of course deal only with the collective phase of the movement. They are mass-leaders and mass-engineers. But the collective is somehow bound to the individual. And after the Mysteries for the collective, shall we not have those for the individuals?



We do not claim to possess the answers to these questions. But just the same it may be worth while to ask them. For answers have a curious way of coming down, apparently from nowhere, to meet those who question hard and persistently enough. It may even be that the task of HAMSA is at present only to ask questions and to present problems. But again the asking is half of the receiving.

The world is in the midst of a vast crisis of activity. Some occultists have spoken of the initiation of our planetary Logos. But to say this is merely to use a symbol. It is to refer to a fundamental drama of human spiritual collective growth. In some deep manner this drama of today may have some connection with that other drama of the Sixth Century B.C. which all over the world (and for us, most particularly, in the Greece of Pythagoras and his successors) renewed the mind of Man. Man is gaining a new mind, a mind which will deal with organic wholes rather than with insulated and fortified fragments; a mind that will give a new meaning to the term "individual."

Such a new meaning depends upon a new statement of the relationship between collective and individual, between State and citizens, between racial, religious, family groups and personalities within them. This new statement is a new dramatic presentation. We are watching a new and colossal performance. But beside this mass drama of mankind, there must rise the dramas of individuals: new Mysteries, new rituals, new dances, new tones and chants, a new art. Let us herald the Mysteries of the Living God.

On the Rio Grande  
August 23

## **Esthetics vs. Ethics**

*(excerpt from a book in preparation)*

What characterizes the new psychological vision is the principle of fulfillment and complete acceptance of the whole of man — individual and collective, conscious and unconscious, cerebral and sympathetic, I and Not-I. It is moreover a method of fulfillment and integration which, quite definitely repudiates ethical valuations and puts in their stead esthetical and creative values. Here however we approach a very delicate subject which can be easily misunderstood and we beg our readers not to infer from what we shall say conclusions which would be in no way warranted.

The very act of living implies two basic directions of functional operation which can be characterized by the terms *awareness and experience*. In a sense, the division is not unlike that of stimulus and response, but with a much more general significance attached to it. We become 'aware' of internal as well as external facts, of the subject, or self, within as well as of the object, or outer world. Awareness, following a well defined process, leads to a more or less concrete, or at least a formed reaction in which the ego and what he has become aware of, interpenetrate. The result of this interpenetration is what we call, in the philosophical sense of the term, an experience, that is, "a moment lived through."



Every kind of "living through" implies a sort of judgment passed upon 1) whatever one has been aware of; 2) the relation of oneself to that thing or quality. But the judgment can be fundamentally of two kinds. In one case it manifests as a *feeling*, in the other as a *thought*. Jung describes feeling as follows (*Psychological Types* p. 544).

"Feeling is primarily a process that takes place between the ego and a given content, a process, moreover, that imparts to the content a definite *value* in the sense of acceptance or rejection ('like' or 'dislike'); but it can also appear, as it were, isolated in the form of 'mood' quite apart from the momentary contents of consciousness or momentary sensation. . . . But even the mood. . . . signifies a valuation; not however, a valuation of one definite, individual conscious content, but of the whole conscious situation at the moment. . . . Feeling is also a kind of *judging*, differing, however, from an intellectual judgment in that it does not aim at establishing an intellectual connection but is solely concerned with the setting up of a subjective criterion of acceptance or rejection."

Without going further into the matter it will be clear that all purely moral or ethical valuations are related to feelings, that is to say they are immediate judgments passed as to the value of a content of the psyche or of a whole situation. The image that came into the consciousness or the situation in which one finds oneself in relation to other objects or persons is 'good' or 'bad.' The ego accepts it or rejects it, in an immediate direct manner and on the basis of either a deep-rooted instinct or an equally deep-rooted traditional collective attitude. Morals are constituted by a set of traditional judgments concerning more or less clearly defined situations or relationships, some of which are based on what appears as biological instinct, others which are the results of an attitude to life consciously and deliberately stressed by a religious, social or philosophical code of values.

Feeling-judgments, and more specifically ethical judgment as to what is 'good' or 'bad,' are valuable in this that they consider the whole of a situation and its bearing upon the whole organism of the experiencer. No time is wasted in intellectual analysis and "maybe." On the other hand, barring those feeling-judgments which are really instinctual reactions and deal with biological necessities, ethical valuations are determined by a "pre-judgment" and often a prejudice, and by the quality and limitations of either the conscious ego or of some powerful racial image in the unconscious. In other words they take things for granted.

While the real intuition springs from an immediate adaptation of the whole of the experiencer to a whole situation, including all its new and never before realized implications — an ethical feeling-judgment values every new situation in terms of set traditional estimations. Thus morals are periodically changing their dictates, and while they may be the expression of real collective intuitions when they are 'fresh,' they soon lose their real significance, as soon and insofar as a new lay-out of basic factors in human nature manifests.



The main point however, which we have to make is that all ethical judgments divide the sum-total of experiences into two categories; one which is acceptable, the other which must be rejected. While this may be a necessity of living in a world where the law of opposites rules and all living whole faces destruction, from without and even from within,— the fact remains that by living almost exclusively by ethical standards or feeling-judgments, man cuts himself away from experiencing half of his life-contents.

Ethical living is 'safety first' living. It is living based upon fear. In the jungle, fear is a real thing and is really the working out of the instinct of preservation. Run or die is the basic law, in most cases. The other solution is to shut yourself within walls which define a zone of safety (the home) and a zone of danger (the outdoors).

Now, if we recall what was said in a previous chapter, mankind is now and has been for many centuries, in a sort of psycho-mental jungle; which the relative safety of our civilized *physical* world does not make any more safe, just the contrary. Mentally speaking, we may say that the European emphasis on intellectual logic and scholasticism, had for aim the building of a zone of mental safety in the jungle of the newly-entered realm of ideation. Logic and the mathematical discipline teach us how to build an intellectual home within the confines of which the power of ideation can function safely. Mathematical formulas constitute a frame-work of operative safety. As long as you keep within it, you can trust the results of your ideas; but if you go off, then your chaotic imagination may lead you astray.

Psychologically speaking, the same has been true. European ethics and philosophy taught us to build a strong and well-guarded home (or rather fortified castle): the conscious, over which ruled in omnipotence the feudal lord; the ego. The woman was enslaved by the lord and the children were cowed into submission. The peasants who toiled around the castle (the instinctual contents of the psyche) were admitted to the castle, under strict supervision of an armed guard, when the enemy menaced the gates, safely locked. Of course, a lovely chapel was built within the fortress in which an autocratic God, camouflaged into a compassionate Savior, was worshipped. The whole picture of the feudal civilization is an exact symbol (as is always the case) of what was happening then *within man's psyche*.

Music also, this direct expression of the psyche, gave a symbolical picture (as also is always the case) of this feudal world; formalism and tonality, being splendid illustrations of this domination of the ethical *principle of exclusion*. The whole of the Christian European civilization is based on that principle. It is based on psychic and mental fear; and on the sometimes necessary yet always thwarting ideal of 'safety first.' It did achieve greatness within the strict boundaries of what it had enclosed within its fortress; and in that sense, European civilization means an over-focalization which threw great and penetrating light upon what it had admitted as valuable and safe. Its fruits constitute therefore a treasure of great price.

But. . . oh! what a terrible mess was made of what it left outside of the walls! How dearly is mankind paying for a Descartes and a Bach! How festering and decaying the contents of the subconscious — the sum-total of our



inherited repressions, moral condemnations and fears! Every focalization means limitation, and thus exclusion of experiences and psychic contents. It must therefore be paid for. The more one excludes — the more ethical judgments control outer and inner behavior —, the more future generations (or in an individual life, the years after 40) will have to suffer the consequences. On the other hand, not to focalize, not to build a fortified home (or conscious) may mean a life of dispersion and constant dodging enemies (within and without); a life in which no solid and lasting achievement is performed — save perhaps that of one's own free selfhood. . . which may be the greatest of all achievements after all!

But we do not wish to pass here any feeling-judgment against feeling-judgments or ethical valuations! On the contrary we intend to show that there is another attitude which, while it does not deny the validity of organically rooted and instinctive-intuitional feeling-judgments, emphasizes a different principle of conduct: the principle of *esthetics*.

Esthetics (in the strict philosophical sense of the term) is opposed to ethics (also in the strict sense of this word) very much as thinking is opposed to feeling. Thinking is defined by Jung as

"That psychological function which, in accordance with its own laws, brings given presentations into conceptual connection. . . The term 'thinking' should be confined to the linking up of representations by means of a concept, where, in other words, an act of judgment prevails, whether such act be the product of one's intention or not."

What characterizes thinking is the fact that it is a *linking up* of factors. In other words, it establishes "conceptual connections," or in general well-defined relationships. It is the climax of the process of awareness of relationship. It brings to light the inherent form (structure or configuration) of things and situations. The thinking judgment is not as to whether a thing is in itself 'good' or 'bad,' but as to whether the form of a presentation establishes a valid set of relationships or not. It does not say: "This thing is bad" — meaning always "for me." It tells whether the disposition of factors in the situation established by the relationship is, first, coherent, then, significant. Having analyzed this disposition of factors, it is moreover able to pass judgment as to whether by emphasizing or restricting some of these factors, a new configuration can be established which would be more coherent and more significant.

Thinking establishes or analyzes connections, which in their total configuration, constitute a form. The form is coherent and significant, or it is not. In this process we find the foundation of esthetics. The esthetical judgment is opposed to the ethical judgment in that it does not exclude any group of elements; but, at most, subordinates them to others of greater significance. It is said that the esthetical process is one of selection. But selection does not mean condemnation of what is not selected. If a painter paints only the outline of a body with his ink-brush, this does not mean that he condemns the elements of flesh, etc., within this outline. It does not pass an ethical judgment against them. He transforms them into *implied values*. He selects certain factors and stresses cer-



tain elements or phases of the total configuration presented by the life-experience (for instance, by the scene his eyes behold). But this stressing must be so produced as to give the *suggestion* of all the elements which have been left obviously unrepresented. In a really great work of art all elements of a life-situation are contained; but some are represented by actual presence, others are implied in the total configuration.

This, translated in terms of everyday living, may be illustrated by the following example. A man determines by ethical-judgment or feeling-judgment, that sexual experiences are 'bad,' and acting upon the judgment, castrates himself (like, for instance, Origen). This is an extreme case insofar as it involves violent physical action; but in a less accentuated form, all self-compulsive asceticism is of the same type. On the other hand, we may think of a spiritual person who has reached normally beyond the desire for sex-experience. The sex-force is active in him, but transformed. It is "implied" but not actually represented. There is no ethical judgment passed against it; but, in the esthetical configuration of the whole of his being, sex is suggested, but not stressed or even concretely represented. While in the self-mutilated man, sex is always present *but in a negative form*, that is, as a positive shadow — therefore as 'evil.'

Ethical judgments *create* evil. Esthetical judgments produce stresses, emphases, *relief*, contrasts, light and shade, actual and implied representations, climaxes and suggestions. They balance opposites; and never condemn absolutely. They harmonize; never discard. They deal with whole relations, which they estimate in the totality of their elements. No element can be cancelled without impairing the relation. In fact, *no element in any relation can ever be cancelled. One can only transform it, by apparent cancellation, into an evil force.* But for him who acts according to the true principle of esthetics, there is no 'evil;' neither is there any 'good.' There is only form or relationship, linking all elements into a wholeness which includes light and shadow, crest and trough, emphasis and mere implication — *all equally significant.* . . but each with a particular significance of its own, a significance which may be marked either with a *minus* or a *plus* sign. In esthetics the only evil is — lack of significance; but it does not reside in the thing or the situation. For all things and all situations, being expressions of the moment of their manifestation, are inherently significant. Lack of significance is only due to man's inability to perceive significance. Thus there is no evil, except ignorance.

The result is that man can be educated into perceiving significances. Ethical compulsion, based on fear, leads to evil. Esthetical education, based on the perception of coherent and significant relationship, destroys the dark fantasy, which evil is. It makes of all living an esthetic activity — a creative activity. It destroys — or should destroy — all valuations based on past-judgments and the compulsion of tradition, as hindrances to the full living of the wholeness of the moment. The wholeness of the moment is the Soul of the moment. And the Soul of the moment is my and your Soul, ever new, ever young, ever rooted in significance, ever rooted in the "Quality" which is our own, the great theme which 'life' develops by making it integrate and transfigure into individual significance the completeness of our own ever-receding horizon.

So to educate man is the task of the New Psychology.